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Response to Citizens United Case, Which Opened Floodgates to Corporate Money in Campaigns

Washington, DC – U.S. Representative Rush Holt (NJ-12) today voted for the DISCLOSE Act, legislation that would increase disclosure and strengthen transparency in federal campaigns. This is the first response to January's Citizens United Supreme Court decision, which opened the floodgates to unrestricted special interest and corporate campaign donations, including from entities controlled by foreign governments. The Senate still must pass the legislation.

"Would you want Hugo Chavez or Vladimir Putin to attack a candidate in your state using a sham front organization? Would you want BP to set up 'Americans for Clean Water' so it can discretely run against candidates who stand for accountability? Would you want a corporation that received TARP funding to use taxpayer dollars to run a political ad? This legislation would prevent all of that from happening," Holt said.

The bill would:

- Prevent U.S. corporations controlled by foreign governments from pumping in secret money to influence U.S. elections;
- Require corporate CEOs to stand by their ads in the same way that candidates do, and require corporations and other organizations to disclose their political expenditures;
- Prevent large entities receiving taxpayer money – including government contractors and TARP recipients – from making political expenditures;
- Stop the manipulation of elections by fly-by-night “hit” groups funded by corporations, special interests, foreign companies, and multimillionaires;
- Give shareholders, organization members, and the public the right to know about corporate and interest group campaign expenditures;

“The Citizens United decision constitutes a blow to democracy that overturns a century old doctrine that restricted corporate money in campaigns,” Holt said. “Our democracy works only when our elections are free, verifiable, fair, and accountable. This first response to that decision would help ensure that future elections meet that standard.”

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